ULI Washington

Land Use Leadership Institute
Mini-Technical Assistance Panel

Establishing a Cultural/Creative District in Southwest D.C.

Existing Local Area Amenities

- Southwest Neighborhood Library
- Arena Stage
- Amidon-Bowen Elementary School
- 1. Westminster Presbyterian Church
  2. Riverside Baptist Church
  3. St. Mathew's Lutheran Church
  4. Christ United Methodist Church
  5. Friendship Baptist Church
  6. Bethel Pentecostal Tabernacle
- Maine Avenue Fish Market (The Wharf)
- Blind Whino Southwest Arts Club
- 1. Banneker Park
  2. Lansburgh Park
  3. Jefferson Parks & Recreation Fields
  4. Southwest Waterfront Park
- Southwest Community Garden
- Duck Pond (Town Center West Park)
- 1. Randall Community and Recreation Center
  2. King Greenleaf Recreation Center
- Titanic Memorial
- Capitol Skyline Hotel

Nearby Amenities

- Washington Nationals Stadium
- East Potomac Golf Course & Driving Range
- Metro Stations in and around the area

Events and Attractions

- Spirit Cruises
- Cherry Blossom Fireworks
- Holiday Parade of Lighted Boats
- Weekly Farm Stands
- Neighborhood Happy Hours
- Annual Pet Parade

Future Development

- DC United Stadium
- Comprehensive Wharf Redevelopment Plan
- Shakespeare Theatre
- Randall Arts Center

PROPOSAL: The Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, The Westminster Presbyterian Church, and the Southwest Business Improvement District partnered for this mTAP to ascertain the viability of creating a cultural district for the Southwest DC neighborhood containing approximately a ten block radius from the Waterfront Metro Station. The intent of the cultural district is to create a strong identity that would be recognized both in and outside of the community for the programming, public art, artistic training and performance opportunities, and the associated economic growth of the area.

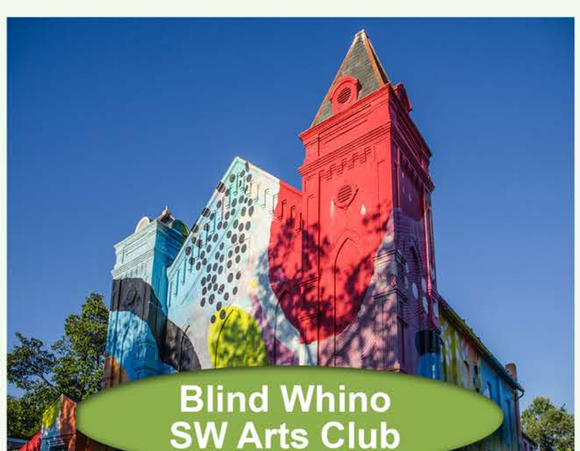
CHALLENGES: The Southwest DC neighborhood is undergoing a massive redevelopment, which creates a potential clash between the existing residents and land uses and the new residents. It is important to the mTAP partners that the history and culture of the area are not lost in this redevelopment. It is also imperative that the existing residents, including the public housing community, are an active part of the cultural district. In addition to the cultural challenges, the redevelopment has also tied up any available land in the area for the foreseeable future, leaving only public spaces and rights-of-way to utilize for public art initiatives.

APPRROACH: The mTAP team familiarized itself with the area, surveyed the existing attributes of the neighborhood like the Southwest Duck Pond and Arena Stage, and gained an understanding of how cultural districts have been implemented elsewhere throughout the country. Since implantation of a cultural district takes multiple steps and a significant effort, the team decided to focus on laying out the first steps towards implementation and creative ideas for the ultimate build out of the cultural district.

RESEARCH: Cultural districts have been implemented around the country to drive development and bring a sense of community to an area. A few successful examples of cultural districts both locally and nationally were identified as part of the team's research effort. National: Shreveport Commons (Shreveport, LA), Pittsburgh Cultural District and Manchester Craftsmen's Guild/Bidwell Training Center (Pittsburgh, PA). Local: Silver Spring Arts & Entertainment District (Silver Spring, MD) and The Gateway Arts & Entertainment District (Prince George's MD). These examples show that the creation of a cultural district can facilitate inclusive economic development that benefits both current and new residents and can be related to the Southwest DC area.

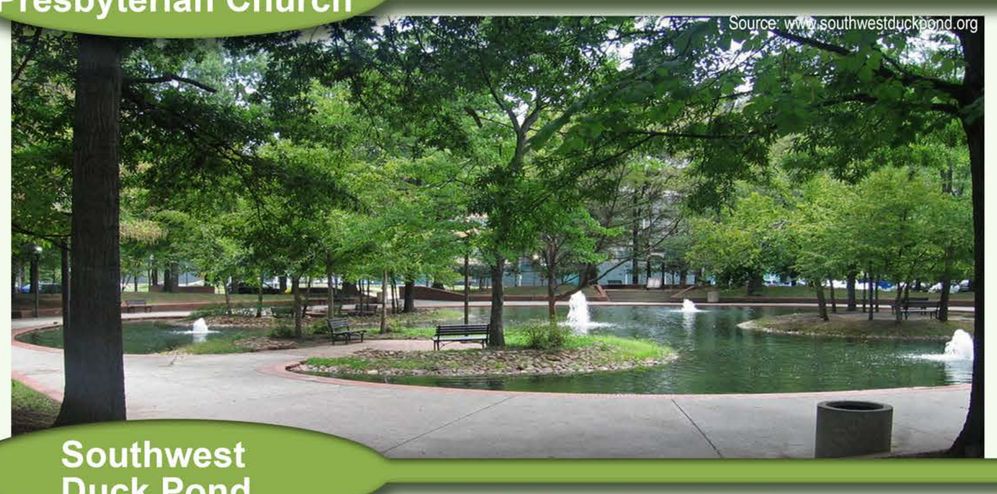
RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Strategic Marketing & Communications Plan
- Accreditation Through the District of Columbia
- Cross Sector Partnerships
- Engage the Community in Creating Art
- Central Events Calendar
- Heritage/Culture/Historic Walking Tour
- Artist Directory
- Public Space for Art Installations, Gallery Walks, Art Fairs, Murals on Bridges and Overpasses
- Live/Work Space for Artists
- DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities
  -Commission, Install, & Maintain Public Art


Blind Whino SW Arts Club

- DC Office of Planning
  -Special Zoning, Plan Incorporation
  -Wayfinding Signage
  -Lighting
  -Landscape and Streetscape Furniture
- MOU with the Department of Recreation
  -SWBID to Operate & Maintain Duck Pond
- Infrastructure Investments, Staffing & Grants
- CSX Cooperation
  -Murals and Public Art
- Development & Development Support
  -Public Art
  -Provision of Cultural and Community Amenities with Development
  -Acquisition and Development of Vacant, Underutilized Properties
  -Develop Artists Workforce Housing
- Informational Kiosk Locations
- Use QR Code for Smart Phones to Link to Cultural District website, maps, calendar
- Graphic Decorative Panels Commissioned by a Local Artist
- Panels to Serve as a Measure to Channel Pedestrians to Crosswalks

Westminster Presbyterian Church



Southwest Duck Pond

Arena Stage

Urban Land Institute

Responsible Land Use | Sustainable Growth